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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to discover what happens to students' attitudes as a result of experience in desegregated schools. In particular, the students studied were involved in a special busing program called Operation Hospitality, which was carried out by the Chicago Catholic School Board. Through this program, black grade school students from inner city parochial schools are bused to all-white schools, mostly in the suburbs. Although the program has been under way since 1967, it was decided to try to make attitudinal comparisons between bused and non-bused black students and white classmates and non-classmates to see if there is any reasonable evidence of change. In addition, the performance of students, in terms of grades and achievement tests, is considered. Data for description of students' attitudes were collected by means of a self-administered questionnaire, which included a 20 word-pair semantic differential and a "draw-a-picture" of a person. The report concludes that there is a positive change in the whites' view of blacks; also, the blacks' view of whites is changed in the same direction. Thus, each group improved its image of the other in ways that increase acceptability. Both groups became slightly more interesting to the other. In terms of scholastic performance, there is no significant difference in either grades or performance on tests between the bused or non-bused blacks. (Author/JW)

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THE EFFECT OF BUSING BLACK GHETTO CHILDREN INTO WHITE SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PURPOSE	1
THE "OPERATION HOSPITALITY" PROGRAM	2
THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	3
THE STUDY PLAN	4
THE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES	5
THE ANALYSIS	6
THE RESULTS	7
I. How do the different groups perceive each other? . .	7
II. How does the perception of self compare among the groups?	12
III. How does scholastic performance compare	14

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The idea of overcoming de facto segregation in big city schools, by transporting black students to white schools, has been justified on the moral issue (segregation due to any cause is wrong), and on the grounds that all black ghetto schools are inferior and fail to give the black child an equal educational opportunity.

The theory has been that the black child in the white school will receive a better education and perform better on intellectual tasks than he would if he remained in the ghetto school. Of course, the opponents argue that the introduction of blacks into a white school ultimately lowers the standards of the school and thus deprives the white student.

Another argument in favor is that the black students and white students will learn to know and accept each other in a mixed school. As long as they are kept separated, the theory goes, the negative attitude and stereotype will remain unchanged and lead to future separation and trouble.

The study is an attempt to learn something about what happens in the minds and attitudes of students exposed to such an experience. It takes advantage of a special busing program called "Operation Hospitality," carried out by the Chicago Catholic School Board. In 1967 a busing program was introduced in an attempt to reduce racial isolation in the Chicago Catholic Schools. This study, begun in May, 1970, is an attempt to learn what has happened as a result of the students' exposure to such an experience. Through this program black grade school students from inner city parochial schools are bused to all-white schools, mostly in the suburbs.

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Although the program has been under way since 1967, it was decided to try to make attitudinal comparisons between bused and non-bused black students and white classmates and non-classmates to see if there is any reasonable evidence of change.

THE "OPERATION HOSPITALITY" PROGRAM

This program started in 1967 with 256 children in grades 4 to 8. Of these, 140 in the 6th, 7th and 8th grades have been in the program two or more years; our study focused on these children.

The basis of selection of the students for busing were threefold:

1. Parents volunteered their children to participate in the program.

2. The child was selected on the basis of reasonably good social, emotional adjustment and academic performance.

3. The number of seats available in the receiving school limited entries at grade level.

Several things must be kept in mind in this experiment:

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1. The students participating in the program were all children in private schools (the Catholic parochial school) whose parents were motivated on either religious or educational grounds to pay for private education.

2. The inner city parochial schools are smaller than the public schools and the atmosphere is conducive to a feeling of closeness and belonging.

3. The inner city parochial schools experience a freedom to experiment with curriculum and adjust to local needs.

Another factor in the program was the selection of the receiving schools. The schools and the parents had to volunteer for the program, and parents served as hosts to the children. In some cases contact went beyond the school into the home on an individual basis.

The number of black students ranged from approximately one to six per class.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research was primarily focused on these principal questions:

1. Do the black, bused children have different attitudes and perceptions of white children than do those not bused?

2. Do white classmates of the black students perceive black children differently than do children in all-white schools?

3. Has the experience changed the self-image of black or white children?

4. Has the experience affected performance as shown by grades or achievement tests?

THE STUDY PLAN

The study was designed to focus on the black, bused children in the 6th through 8th grades. They had almost all been in the white school for two years, which would give time for them to adjust and react to the new environment.

Since, at this time, it was not possible to plan a before and after study, it was decided to make a comparison between the bused blacks and a similar sample of blacks in all-black parochial schools. For the whites we used a sample of white classmates of the bused blacks and a similar sample from all-white parochial schools.

Thus, the study was designed around four cells planned for 140 to 150 students in each. The figures shown are the final usable questionnaires:

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	N
Bused black students in white schools	126
Black students in black schools	128
White students classmates of bus	150
White students in all-white schools	140
TOTAL	544

The data was collected in the schools with a self-administered questionnaire given to students in small groups. As far as possible, all the bused students in the 6th through 8th grades were included. The white classmates were a rough selection from the same classrooms of children of comparable age and sex. Similar samples were drawn from four all-white schools and from four black, inner city schools.

THE RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

A self-administered questionnaire (shown in the Appendix) was used, which included:

1. A 20 word-pair semantic differential.
2. Ten incomplete sentences.
3. A "draw-a-picture" of a person.

The semantic differential used word pairs selected to be generally understood by children at this level and to reflect basic factors found in other studies of self-image and personality. This was used three times to describe:

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1. "The kind of person I am."

2. "Black kids are..."

3. "White kids are..."

The sentence completions were used principally to get free expression on teachers, school, and school work. They were used to separate the three semantic differentials and to give a change of pace in the task.

The "draw-a-person" was used as the final task.

In addition, there was some personal information, and the schools provided current grade averages and test scores for 1968 and 1970 on Stanford Achievement test of paragraph meanings, math concepts, and math applications.

This combination of data has proven very effective in measuring differences in concepts, images and attitudes in many studies. The semantic differential can be handled statistically through regression and factor analysis, and the more open projective materials can then be examined by factorial types to see if meaningful differences exist.

THE ANALYSIS

At present, budget limitations only allow for a complete statistical analysis of the semantic differential and data on age, grades, and achievement test scores. This analysis included a correlation matrix of all variables, a factor analysis, and regression analysis.

This report is based entirely on the results of this analysis. We hope that later we will be able to analyze the other data.

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THE RESULTS

The findings can best be discussed in the framework of three general questions:

I. How do the different groups perceive each other?

II. How does the perception of self compare among the groups?

III. How does scholastic performance compare?

I. How do the different groups perceive each other?

The outstanding finding is that, in the integrated classrooms both groups have more favorable attitudes toward the other.

What is the evidence?

The factor analysis showed five major factors involved in both self-evaluation and evaluation of others. There were the following clusters:

1. Friendly, good, safe.
2. Strong, tough, brave.
3. Exciting, fancy, interesting.
4. Neat, clean, working.
5. Lively, bright, smart.

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When the students rated either themselves or others on the semantic differential, the words in each cluster correlated highly. Thus, if a student rated himself as friendly he tended to rate himself as good, safe, and happy. Also, if he rated himself as unfriendly, he tended to rate himself as bad.

For each individual, his score was computed for each cluster. Average scores for each of the four groups of students were then computed. Comparing scores, we find (as shown in Chart 1) that there is a positive change in the whites view of blacks on the clusters good, friendly, safe, and smart, bright, lively.

Also, the blacks view of whites is changed in the same directions. These changes were large enough to be statistically significant.

Thus, each group improved its image of the other in ways that increase acceptability. The improvement of the white image of blacks in the factor good, friendly, safe, is especially strong.

There are other factor clusters in which one group changed its views significantly while the other showed little change or where there were only modest changes. (See Chart 2.)

Clearly the stereotype image of blacks as dirty is broken down for whites with black classmates, but the blacks view of whites remained little changed.

Both groups became slightly more interesting to the other.

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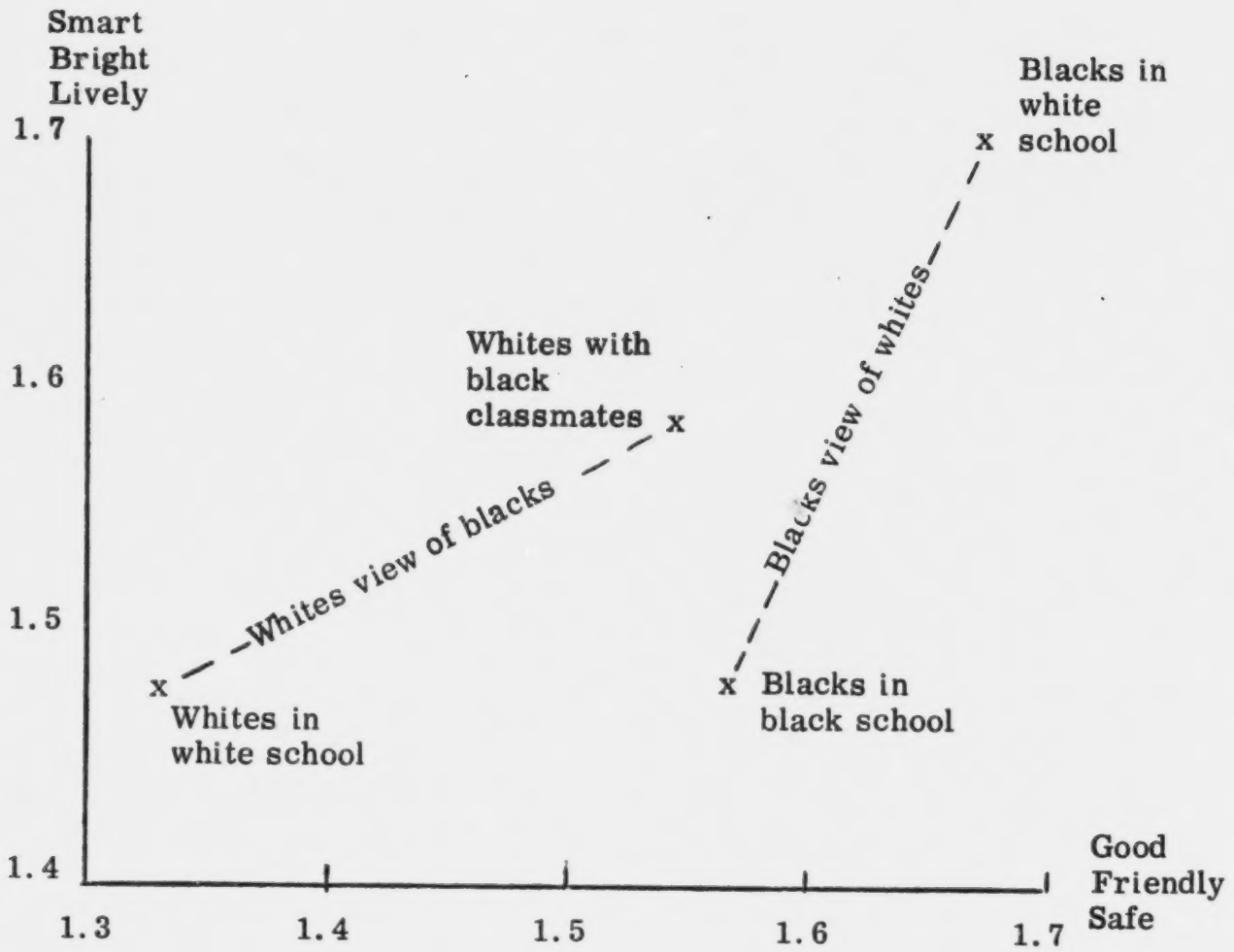


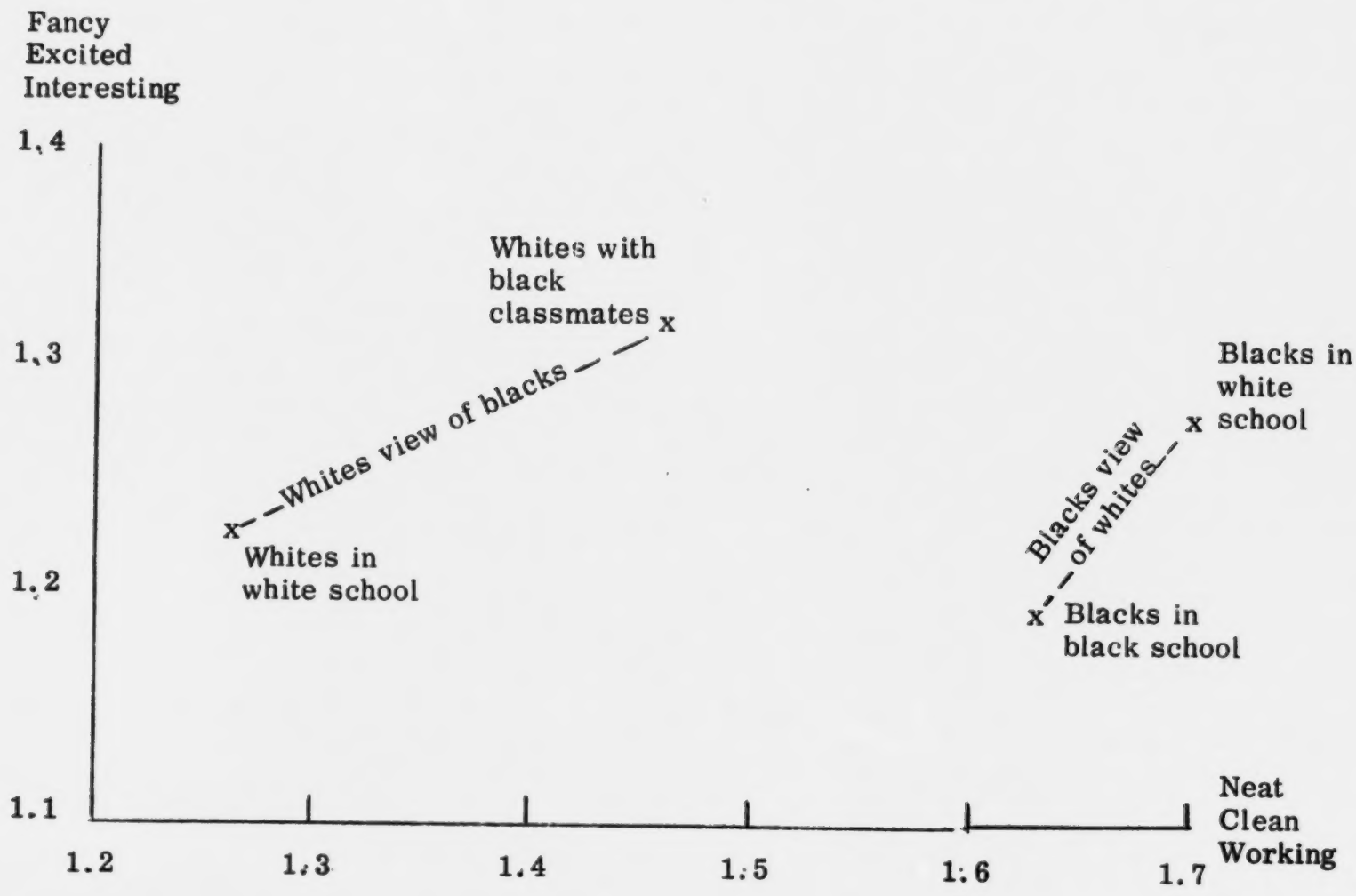
BLACKS VIEW OF WHITES

Blacks in Black School		Cluster Scores	Blacks in White School	
Factor Cluster	bad mean dangerous	1.57 → 1.67	good friendly safe	Factor Cluster
Factor Cluster	dumb dull quiet	1.47 → 1.70	smart bright lively	Factor Cluster

WHITES VIEW OF BLACKS

Whites in White School			Whites with Black Classmates	
Factor Cluster	bad mean dangerous	1.35 → 1.55	good friendly safe	Factor Cluster
Factor Cluster	dumb dull quiet	1.47 → 1.58	smart bright lively	Factor Cluster

CHART 1



BLACKS VIEW OF WHITES

Blacks in Black School		Cluster Scores	Blacks in White School	
Factor Cluster	messy dirty lazy	1.63 → 1.70	neat clean working	Factor Cluster
Factor Cluster	plain calm ordinary	1.19 → 1.26	fancy excited interesting	Factor Cluster

WHITES VIEW OF BLACKS

Factor Cluster	messy dirty lazy	1.26 → 1.46	neat clean working	Factor Cluster
Factor Cluster	plain calm ordinary	1.23 → 1.31	fancy excited interesting	Factor Cluster

CHART 2

On another factor -- strong, brave, tough -- blacks were rated highest by all four groups. The whites rate themselves lower and blacks rate whites very low. (Chart 3.)

This generally accepted belief in the toughness and bravery of blacks may reflect the belief that life in the ghetto is harsh and people must be tough to stand it.

This data suggests that each group, in the absence of regular contact with the other, holds a variety of concepts of the other in comparison to themselves. The contact in the school modifies these concepts and in ways which reduce the barriers to comfortable interpersonal relations.

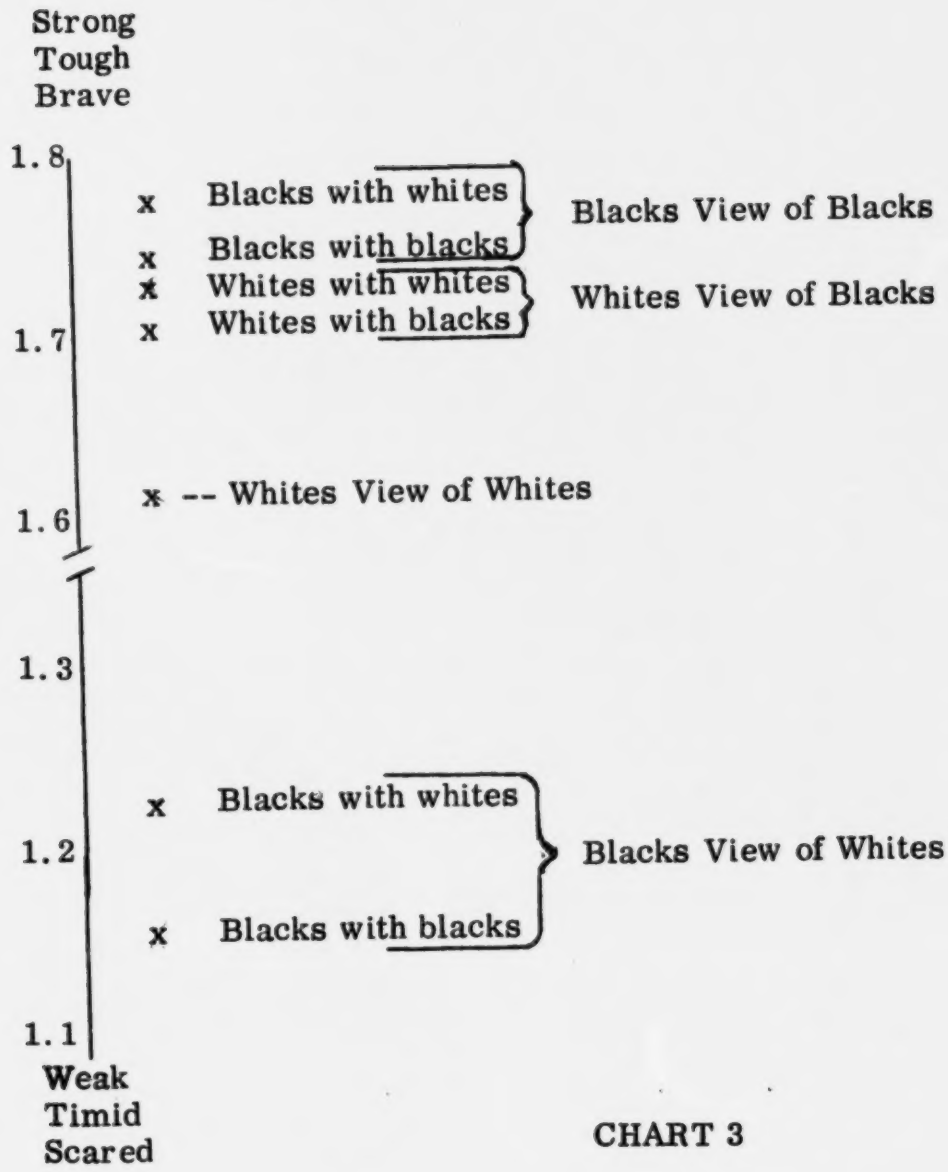
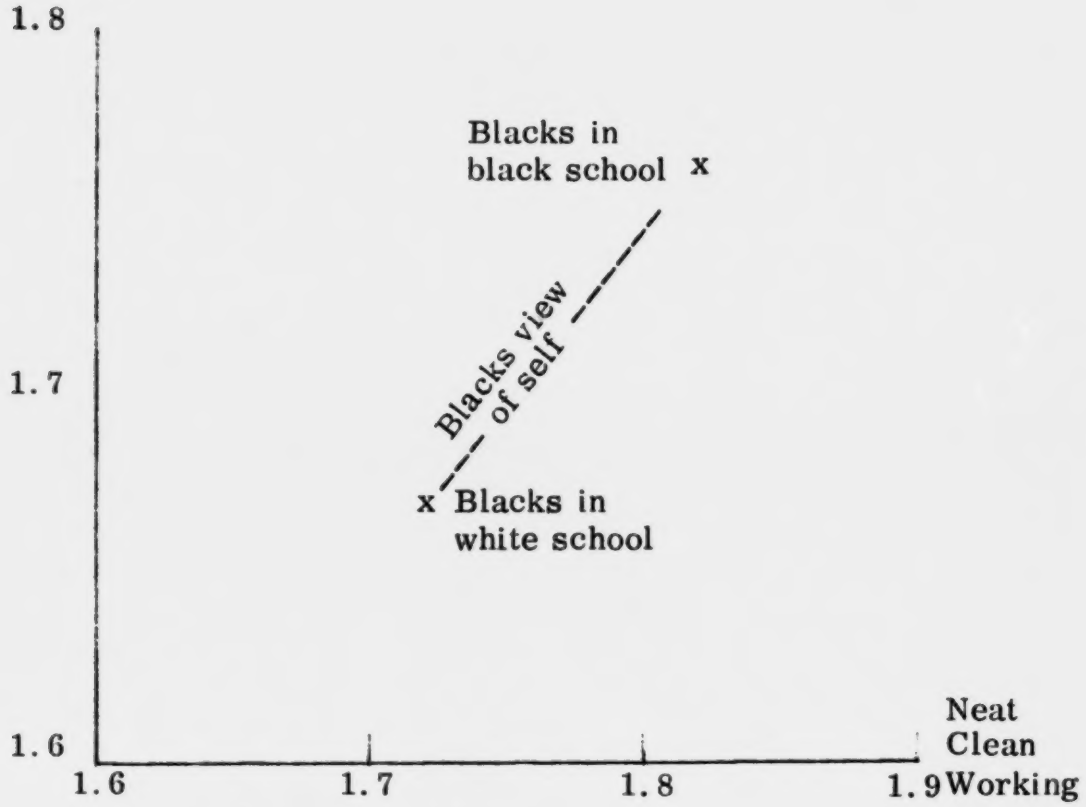


CHART 3

II. How does the perception of self compare among the groups?

The principal finding is that bused blacks rate themselves lower on certain factors than do blacks in black schools.



BLACKS VIEW OF SELF

Blacks in Black School		Cluster Scores	Blacks in White School	
Factor Cluster	dumb dull quiet	1.76 ←1.67	smart bright lively	Factor Cluster
Factor Cluster	messy dirty lazy	1.82 ←1.72	neat clean working	Factor Cluster

CHART 4

A person's self-concept measured in this way partly reflects his contacts with the world around him. A bright child among less bright children will probably rate himself brighter than the same child among others equally bright. These ratings suggest that the bused child taken from a familiar situation in which he was succeeding very well and thrust into a white school became less sure of his superiority.

III. How does scholastic performance compare?

For each child in all four groups there was given:

1) Current grade average;

2) 1970 and 1968 performance on a standard test of:

   a) paragraph meaning,
   b) math comprehension,
   c) math application.

The 1968 performance tests were missing for about 20% of the black students, usually because of change of schools.

The principal finding is that when adjustments are made for internal differences in achievement level, there is no significant difference in either grades or performance on tests between the bused or non-bused blacks.

The raw scores for the four groups showed that the whites performed better than blacks on grades and on the three 1970 performance tests. Also, the bused blacks performed better than the non-bused. However, these four groups were not matched in terms of achievement level so these comparisons are not necessarily valid as they stand.

Using 1970 paragraph meaning scores as a base for comparison, it was possible to make statistical adjustment for the internal difference in achievement level of the four groups. This gave an adjusted score which could then be validly compared.

This analysis showed that improvement in the three achievement tests correlated directly with previous level. Thus, children with high scores in 1968 showed more improvement than those with low scores. Those with low scores improved less and were relatively farther behind. This was true of all four groups.

Adjusting each group for this difference in initial achievement level showed:

1. No significant difference between blacks and whites.

2. No significant differences between bused and non-bused blacks.

It is possible that the parochial schools in the ghetto are providing an effective academic growth and are comparable to suburban schools in this respect. Another possibility is that there may be a difference in the nuances of the experience and learning environment which are not measured by these tests.

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